DIABETIC EMERGENCIES

2 hours

Lesson Objectives

- Identify patient taking diabetic medications with altered mental status and implications of a diabetes history.
- State emergency medical care of patient taking diabetic medicine
- Show relationship between airway management and altered mental status.

Lesson Objectives

- State generic and trade names, medication forms, dose administration, action, and contraindications for oral glucose.
- Evaluate need for medical direction in the care of the diabetic patient.

Overview

- S & S of Diabetic Patient
- Seizures
- Altered Mental Status
- Emergency Care
- Airway Management
- Medication - Glucose

Signs & Symptoms

- Rapid onset of altered mental status
  - After missing a meal, patient took prescribed insulin
  - After vomiting a meal, patient took prescribed insulin
  - After unusual exercise or work episode
  - No identifying predisposing factor

Signs & Symptoms

- Intoxicated appearance
- Staggering, slurred speech to complete unresponsiveness
- Elevated heart rate
- Cold, clammy skin
- Hunger
- Seizures

Medications Found at Scene

- Insulin
  - Diabinese
  - Orinase
  - Micronase

Signs & Symptoms

- Uncharacteristic behavior
- Anxious
- Combative

Seizures

- Seizures, including febrile, should be considered life-threatening
- May be brief or prolonged

Causes of Seizures

- Fever
- Infections
- Poisoning
- Hypoglycemia
- Trauma
- Decreased level of O2
- Idiopathic in children

Seizures-Emergency Care

- Assure patent airway
- Place on side if no possible C-spine trauma
- Have suction ready
- Cyanotic-assure airway and artificially ventilate

Seizures-Emergency Care

- **Transport**
  - **Although brief seizures are not harmful, there may be a more dangerous underlying condition**
  - **Rule out trauma, head injury can cause seizures**

Altered Mental Status- Causes

- Hypoglycemia
- Poisoning
- Post Seizure
- Infection
- Head Trauma
- Decreased O2

Emergency Care

- Assure patent airway
- Be prepared to suction/ventilate
- Transport
- Consider trauma

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

- **Altered mental status with history of diabetes**
  - **Perform initial assessment**
  - **Perform focused history and physical exam**

Focused HX and Physical Exam

- Dissemination of the episode
- Onset
- Duration
- Associated symptoms

Focused HX and Physical Exam

- Evidence of trauma
- Interruptions
- Seizures
- Fever

Emergency Care

- Baseline Vitals and SAMPLE
- Assure known history of diabetes
- Last meal? Last Medication dose? Related illness?
- Determine if patient can swallow
- Administer oral glucose
- Airway management?

Oral Glucose

- **Medication Name**
  - **Generic-Glucose, Oral**
  - **Trade-Glutose, Insta-glucose**
  - **Indications**
  - **Patients with altered mental staus with a known history of diabetes controlled by medications**

Oral Glucose

- **Contraindications**
  - **Unresponsiveness**
  - **Unable to swallow**

Medication form - Gel

Dosage - one tube

Administration of Glucose

- Obtain order from medical direction
- Assure S & S of altered mental status with a known hx of diabetes
- Assure patient is conscious and can swallow
- Protect their airway

Administer Glucose

- Between cheek and gum
- Place on tongue depressor between cheek and gum

- Perform ongoing assessment

Oral Glucose

- Actions - increases blood sugar
- Side-effects - none when given properly. May be aspirated with a patient with a gag reflex.
- Re-assessment strategies - patient loses consciousness or seizures, remove tongue depressor from mouth!

Summary

- Diabetic S & S
- Seizures
- Altered Mental Status
- Emergency Medical Care
- Airway Management
- Medication-Oral Glucose